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cussion is summed up in a battle-cry of a united British empire for the fundamental principles of human liberties. It is a plea for the perpetuation of the most cherished elements of the British constitution, on the eve of a great contest that has threatened the very existence of Britain and British constitutionalism.

The Commodities Clause. By THOMAS LATIMER KIBLER. Washington, D.C.: John Byrne & Co., 1916. 8vo, pp. 178.

The reader might be led by the title of this instructive work to conclude that it is a thoroughgoing technical treatise on the legal aspects of railroad reform legislation; but he will find rather an interesting story of the conditions which gave rise to the necessity for the enactment of the clause in question, and a vivid description of the various stages through which the act passed in the process of its making, due to the conflict of interests in Congress. Last of all but not least, Mr. Kibler shows in what respects the act is weak and has not served the purpose for which it was intended, and points out a remedial course of action.

The aim of the Commodities Clause was to eliminate the possibility of a railroad company's owning mines or oil property and at the same time carrying the products of these mines or oil wells. A separation of the interests was supposed to do away with discrimination against competitors and to diminish the tendency toward monopoly. But the clause in its final form left a loophole whereby the railroads may own and operate coal mines, "sell" the coal to a sales company which is under its control, and continue to haul the product of the mine. It is a simple evasion of the spirit of the law and can be remedied by forbidding any railroad company to own mines in the territory which it serves. This would take away the incentive for discrimination and discourage such a merger of large interests of this nature.

A Legal Minimum Wage. By JOHN O'GRADY. (Dissertation, Catholic University of America.) Washington: privately printed, 1915. Pp. 138.

This is a brief summary of the modern minimum wage movement and its results in different countries. As an introduction to this movement two chapters of historical narrative are given, sketching the attempts at wage control prior to the *laissez-faire* movement, and also gild and statutory regulations during the Middle Ages. Chapters follow on the arbitration and wages-board systems in New Zealand and Victoria and in England and Wales. The results of the foregoing have been satisfactory, concludes the writer, although many non-juridical factors have contributed to their success.

The remainder of the book is devoted to a comparative study of the wage plans adopted by the commonwealths in the United States. The last chapter

gives the result of a canvass of the opinions of American economists on minimum wage legislation.

Though the book is in the main descriptive, it is tinged with propagandism. The author favors the minimum wage. He advances no new arguments, but omits important criticisms. Universally, it is contended, efficiency has increased with increased wages and the standard of living has been raised; employers are satisfied in a majority of cases, and little unemployment has resulted. No study, however, is here made of the cost to the consumer.

The Federal Executive. By JOHN PHILIP HILL. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1916. 8vo, pp. 269. \$2.00.

This volume is practically a history of the Executive Department of the United States government. The main theme of the whole book is the growth of power of the president and his cabinet. All of the more important executive functions have been traced back to their sources. A considerable space is devoted to the consideration of the multiplicity of duties attached to the Executive Department and the great importance of these duties. Mr. Hill holds to the idea that this relative enlargement of the scope of executive power is in keeping with the general advancement of civilization, and points out general lines along which still further prestige should be given to this Department. A greater degree of efficiency can best be obtained by a still further concentration of discretionary power in the hands of the few. There seems to be no question in the author's mind that as time goes on the cabinet will come to be a more important factor in the shaping of our international as well as our internal policies. New departments will be added as the need for them is felt, and each will tend to outgrow the temporary restrictions placed upon it by shelf-worn traditions.

The Operation of the Initiative, Referendum, and Recall in Oregon. By JAMES DUFF BARNETT. New York: Macmillan, 1915. 8vo, pp. xi+295. \$2.00.

In this book Professor Barnett endeavors to show the actual working of the initiative, referendum, and recall in the state of Oregon, and the attitude of the people toward direct legislation. The same problems which have confronted legislation by representative bodies are shown to reappear when the people become their own legislature. Particularly, the indifference of voters, absence of skill in drafting of laws, irresponsible indorsers, the influence of organized groups, difficulties with the ballot by reason of complexity, and development of a professional group of "paid petition passers," are revealed; and the attempts of the people to eliminate these difficulties are set forth. A noteworthy feature of the work is the reliance upon the press of the state,